

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 MCT-01 AGRE-00 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05

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-----061223Z 091040 /20

R 060939Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5467

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 330

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMA KO 0063

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ML

SUBJECT: COUP RUMORS AGAIN IN MALI

1. DURING PAST 10 DAYS WE HAVE HEARD VARIOUS RUMORS INVOLVING A THWARTED COUP PLOT AND SEVERAL IMPENDING CABINET CHANGES. AS USUAL, THERE IS NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION, BUT ACCUMULATION OF REPORTS SUGGESTS THAT SOMETHING IS GOING ON THAT COULD AFFECT SENIOR LEVELS OF MALIAN GOVERNMENT.

2. WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR TELLS US THAT AMATEURISH COUP PLOTTING LANDED FORMER EDUCATION MINISTER, ABDOULAYE SINGARE AND THREE ACCOMPLICES, INCLUDING ONE ARMY CAPTAIN, IN JAIL IN LATE DECEMBER 1976. FOREIGN
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MINISTER CISSOKO TOLD VISITING AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER FROM GHANA ON JANUARY 4 THAT FORMER PRESIDENT MODIBO KEITA WAS BEING DETAINED AT REMOTE KIDAL PRISON IN VITH REGION AND WOULD NOT BE RELEASED BECAUSE FORMER KEITA ACCOMPLICES RELEASED IN 1976 AND EARLIER HAD, SAID CISSOKO, PROMPTLY GONE TO IVORY COAST WHERE THEY WERE ORGANIZING OPPOSITION TO MALI'S RULING

MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION. CISSOKO ASSURED AUSTRALIAN THAT KEITA WOULD STAY WHERE HE WAS.

3. WE HAVE HEARD OTHER RUMORS OF IMMINENT CABINET RESHUFFLE WHICH WOULD SEE DEFENSE MINISTER DOUKARA LOSE HIS JOB, AS WELL AS FOREIGN MINISTER CISSOKO, HEALTH MINISTER MAMADI KEITA, FINANCE MINISTER FOUNEKE KEITA, AND MINISTER OF STATE ENTERPRISES SEKOU SANGARE. DOUKARA'S MISHANDLING OF PROCEEDS FROM SALE OF DONATED DROUGHT RELIEF GRAIN, AND HIS WIDELY KNOWN COMMERCIAL, REAL ESTATE, AND TRANSPORTATION INTERESTS MAKE HIM GORWING POLITICAL LIABILITY FOR MILITARY COMMITTEE. FOREIGN MINISTER CISSOKO IS SAID SIMPLY TO BE TIRED. THE OTHER MINISTERS ARE DEALING WITH UNMANAGEABLE PROBLEMS AND THEIR STANDING HAS THEREBY SUFFERED. WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR ALSO SAYS THAT UN AMBASSADOR KANTE MAY BE ON THE WAY OUT (WHICH, IF TRUE, WOULD HAVE BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON U.S.-MALIAN RELATIONS).

4. AT END OF PRESIDENT TRAORE'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE (ANALYSIS BY AIRGRAM), HE HINTED BROADLY THAT THERE WOULD BE CHANGES AT THE TOP SINCE QTE THE GROUP IN POWER ALWAYS HAS A TENDENCY TO VANITY, THE EASY LIFE, AND THE MISTRUST OF THE POPULATION. END QTE PRESIDENT CITED VIRTUES OF CHANGE AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT ABUSE OF POWER AND SAID ALL SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR SUCH CHANGE.

5. COMMENT: REMARKS REPORTED PARAGRAPH 2 ABOVE ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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FIRST WE HAVE HEARD OF CIVILIAN OPPOSITION ORGANIZING AGAINST MILITARY COMMITTEE. WHILE COOPERATION OF MILITARY ELEMENTS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO TIP OVER PRESENT GOVERNMENT, INDICATIONS THAT CIVILIANS MAY BE DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH DISSIDENT MILITARY OFFICERS COULD BE MORE OF THREAT THAN BARRACKS PLOTS OF PAST. RUMORED CABINET RESHUFFLE MAY BE DESIGNED TO GET HOUSE IN ORDER BEFORE FEBRUARY VISIT OF FRENCH PRESIDENT SINCE FRENCH HAVE KEEN INTEREST IN FINANCE PORTFOLIO AND HOLD EFFECTIVE VETO POWER OVER CHOICE OF INCUMBENT. EVIDENCE FOR FOREGOING IS CLEARLY NOT HARD, BUT PERSISTENCE OF RUMORS AND AIR OF EXPECTATION AMONG POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS MALIANS FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S SPEECH LEAD TO VIEW THAT SOME CHANGE WOULD NOT COME AS SURPRISE. BYRNE

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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